

about patience. My colleagues may have noticed that I used a different gavel this afternoon, a gavel hand-built by Mr. Dieterle especially for this occasion. The head of the gavel is built from white ash that was cured for a year and air-dried for a decade. Mr. Dieterle rescued wood for the handle from a razed Lutheran church in Millersville and made its terminal from African padauk. Perhaps most impressively, Mr. Speaker, the striking block was made from a piece of apple wood that he has been curing for over 50 years. That is a very long time, Mr. Speaker.

This gavel should remind each of us as we gather to take up today's agenda that patience is a virtue and that it often takes 50 years to get something just right, whether that something is a gavel or a book or a piece of legislation. Dick Dieterle said that he is pretty sure the strongest man in the House will not break it. That is what happens when you take the time to perfect something. And looking at the gavel, Mr. Speaker, I am pretty sure that Mr. Dieterle's time was not wasted.

DEMOCRATS' EDUCATION AGENDA

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Democrats' education agenda which will be unveiled tomorrow. It calls for modernizing schools and reducing class size by hiring new teachers. To prepare our students for the future, we must not only increase the number of teachers, but also improve the quality of teachers.

I intend to introduce a bill this week which provides scholarships or stipends for outstanding graduate students enrolled in teacher training programs in math and science. These students would then be obligated to teach math or science for 3 years in an urban or rural public secondary school or repay their stipends.

Among 25 nations, U.S. students ranked 12th and 9th respectively in math and science skills. Almost 50 percent of these students were taught by teachers who did not prepare in those fields. We can do better. I urge my colleagues to recruit and reward future math and science teachers for American children.

THE HEROIC STORY OF CHRIS NOAD

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, not often do we bring stories, heroic stories, before the House of Representatives, so it today brings me great pleasure to tell you about a heroic young man named Chris Noad of Dayton, Ne-

vada. Last Friday Chris was awarded the Boy Scout Gold Honor Medal, the highest life-saving award in scouting, for unusual heroism in saving a life at considerable risk to himself.

Twelve-year-old Chris came to the rescue of his younger sister Kathryn as she was being viciously attacked by a dog in their yard. Hearing the painful cries of his sister, Chris disregarded his own safety, rushed into the yard and was able to grab and pin a 120-pound Rottweiler until further help arrived, allowing his sister to escape. Fortunately Kathryn survived this attack, but that may not have been so without the truly courageous action of her older brother.

The actions taken by Chris Noad during those frightful moments can serve as an example to all of us. Doing the right thing at the right time even when it is at our own jeopardy is something we all need to remember. Large acts of bravery do not always occur by large people. You are truly a hero to your family, to your community and to the State of Nevada.

MEXICAN DRUG CARTEL RECRUITING STREET GANGS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, according to reports, Mexico's drug cartel is recruiting American kids in street gangs in the city of San Diego. That is right. California has become the new breeding ground for Mexican drug traffickers. Unbelievable.

While the Pentagon last year spent \$3 billion in Bosnia and Iraq, the Pentagon has announced they are going to suspend their operations on our borders. Beam me up. Let us put the seed corn where the fertilizer can reach it, Mr. Speaker. If Congress can spend billions of dollars to secure foreign borders for foreign citizens in foreign lands, then the Congress of the United States can secure the border in America for the American people. I just have one thing to say to the Pentagon. Suspend this. Are we inhaling or what?

TAXES

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday on page 1 of USA Today, there was a very interesting chart that is here to my left. It shows the rising tax load. While that is no surprise to anyone paying taxes over the past few decades, this chart caught my eye for several reasons. It shows that the tax burden has been rising steadily since 1965 for families with one working parent and for families with both working parents. Either way, married or single, Uncle Sam takes more and more, and families pay more and more. That is a for-

mula that brings joy to the hearts of big government liberals and Federal bureaucrats and government planners of all sorts. But it does not do much for families who are trying to get ahead.

It is time to change that course. The tax burden on American families, especially middle-class families, is too high. It has been going up for years, and it is time to go the other direction. It is time for some tax relief for the middle class, the backbone of America, that plays by the rules, works hard and pays the taxes.

PUERTO RICAN STATEHOOD

(Mr. GUTIERREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, today there will be a rule taken up on the Young bill, a bill that is supposed to deal with the self-determination of the people of Puerto Rico. It is really a statehood bill. It is a bill that will guarantee statehood.

In 1993, as many of my colleagues remember, the people of Puerto Rico had a plebiscite, independence, Commonwealth and statehood. We all remember the headlines, the headlines read blaring across our Nation, Puerto Rico rejects statehood. Now we are going to come back 5 years later, and since they lost it that time, we are going to write a statehood bill to make sure that that is the option. It is wrong. I am going to give everybody one example.

My father did not see me until I was 1 year old. The reason was because he was serving in the Armed Forces of this Nation. He was born on the island of Puerto Rico. He served in the Armed Forces of this Nation. Under the bill we are going to consider tomorrow, we are going to state that my father's citizenship is statutory. Now, when my father goes and votes, and he likes the Commonwealth, he disagrees with his son about a lot of things, and that is one thing we disagree about, he is going to want to vote for a Commonwealth. He served in the Armed Forces of this Nation, an American citizen. When he goes to vote, Mr. Speaker, the only thing that is going to guarantee him his American citizenship is statehood. You want an election that is going to guarantee a false vote, that is going to be tomorrow. Let the people of Puerto Rico decide.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN INDONESIA

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to draw attention to the human rights abuses taking place in Indonesia. As many of my colleagues know, Indonesia is experiencing tremendous economic and social upheaval. In the ensuing panic, the people and government have tagged the Christian and